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NT 753 Research Methods in New Testament Interpretation

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NT753 Research Methods in New Testament Interpretation

Joel B. Green, Instructor

Final Version

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Fall 2006

Office Hours: Wed’s 1:00–2:00; Thur’s 1:30–3:00

Catalog Description
An advanced seminar in which participants explore through readings, practice, and critical discussion the range of methods employed in New Testament study today. The entire research process — from “getting into the conversation” and specifying a “thesis” to the presentation of one’s research — will be discussed, modeled, and practiced.

Prerequisites: NT501/502 or equivalent and at least one exegetical course.

Illustrative materials for the Seminar will relate to the representation of the death of Jesus in the New Testament.

Objectives
Having successfully completed this course, participants should be able:

• To describe the major approaches to New Testament study today — including behind-the-text, in-the-text, and in-front-of-the-text methods;
• To apply the range of critical methods employed in New Testament study today;
• To determine what methods are appropriate to particular problems or questions in New Testament interpretation;
• To articulate central concerns, strengths, and weaknesses of the various methodological approaches comprising New Testament interpretation;
• To construct, follow, and revise a research agenda around a New Testament text or area of concern to New Testament study; and
• To engage in thoughtful and generous criticism of the research agenda and products of others.

Course Reading — Required
Course Reading on the Death of Jesus — Recommended
McKnight, Scot. *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory*. Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005.

Course Requirements

Written materials must be submitted on time. Late work will receive no written comments. For assignments that are more than one week tardy, the grade will be penalized one-third letter grade per day.

(1) *Class Preparation, Attendance, and Participation*. See the schedule of reading for each class session. Note that assigned reading should be completed by the day listed. Attendance at and readiness to participate in all sessions of the Seminar is expected. Persons who attend all sessions of the seminar will have 2 points added to their final grade.

(2) *Weekly Assignments on Method*. See the schedule of exercises. Weekly exercises provide opportunities for practicing the methods/approaches presented throughout the Seminar. They are generally to be regarded as programmatic in character, not exhaustive, and are to be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the class session when each is due. They should be no longer than 700 words, typed, single-spaced. (15 %)

(3) *Major Research Paper*. The primary assignment for the Seminar is the preparation and presentation of a major exegesis paper: 7000 — 8000 words (including notes and bibliography), typed, double-spaced. Participants in the Seminar may choose any New Testament text that relates to the focus of the course on the representation of the death of Jesus in the New Testament. Progress on essays will follow the schedule below:

Deadlines:
(1) “Close Reading” – 5 October (5%)
(2) “Bibliography” (in appropriate research languages) – 19 October (5%)
(3) “Thesis” – 26 October (5%)
(4) “Presentation” – Various: 16 November – 7 December (15%)
   Note that copies of penultimate drafts of papers are to be made available to members of the Seminar no less than one week prior to their presentation.
(5) “Final Paper” – 4:00 pm, 14 December (40%)
For more information on research paper expectations and grading criteria, see the Course Center.

(4) *Critical Response*. Each participant will prepare a written response (ca. 700 words, typed, double-spaced) on an essay to be prepared by another member of the Seminar. Responses are to be presented in written form to the author of the paper and to the instructor, and in oral form to the Seminar, at the class session for which the paper is due to be discussed. (15%)
Course Schedule

To Read: Booth et al., §§1-2; Green, chs. 1-2.

14 Sept  Using the Library. Establishing the Text.
Guest Presenter: Joy Mark, Faculty Information Commons
To Read: Booth et al., §§1-2; Green, ch. 7.

21 Sept  Behind the Text.
To Read: Green, chs. 3-6.
Due: Text-critical Assignment on Luke 23:34.

28 Sept  “A Close Reading of the Text.”
To Read: Green, chs. 10-13.
Due: Historical-Critical Assignment on 1 Cor 15:3-(?).

To Read: Booth et al., §3
Due: “Close Reading”
Recommended Reading: Nancey C. Murphy, Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1994).

12 Oct  From Composition to New Criticism. The New Redaction Criticism.
To Read: Booth et al., §4; Green, chs. 12, 14.
Due: Critical Engagement Assignment

To Read: Green, chs. 4, 9; Greenblatt (photocopy).
Due: Text-Oriented Assignment on Mark 15:33-39.
Due: “Bibliography”

26 Oct  
**Between (at Least) Two Worlds—2: Readerly Perspectives.**
To Read: Green, chs. 13-17.
Due: Social-Scientific Analysis of 1 Pet 2:21-25.
Due: “Thesis”

2 Nov  
**Linguistics: From Etymology to Discourse.**
To Read: Green, chs. 8-9.
Due: Reader Response or Ideological Criticism Assignment on Rev 5:1-10.

9 Nov  
**The “Response Genre.” Intertextuality. Canon and Theology.**
To Read: Green, chs. 11, 18-19; Booth et al., pp. 255-58.

16 Nov  
**Presentation and Discussion of Research — 1.**
Due: Analysis of the Use of the OT in Gal 3:10-14.

23 Nov  
No Class.

30 Nov  
**Presentation and Discussion of Research — 2.**

7 Dec  
**Presentation and Discussion of Research — 3.**

14 Dec  
Due: Research Papers (Final Edition).